

# **Education and Workforce Development Cabinet KWIB unveils new Kentucky Work Ready Communities Program website**

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## **Contact Information:**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Feb. 14, 2013)** – The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) has launched its new more user friendly and professional Kentucky Work Ready Communities website at <http://workready.ky.gov>.

The Kentucky Work Ready Communities certification from KWIB and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet assures employers that a local workforce has the talent and skills necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require.

“The new website really reflects how much the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program has evolved since it was started in the state a year ago,” said Ed Holmes, chair of the KWIB. “Work Ready Communities is one of KWIB’s most prolific initiatives to come out of the WorkSmart Kentucky Strategic Plan. We hope it will continue to engage communities across the state in working toward a quality workforce that will meet the needs of business and industry in Kentucky.”

To be designated a Kentucky Work Ready Community, business, education, economic development and elected leaders must collaborate and apply for the certification. Counties have to meet criteria in six areas including high school graduation rate, National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) holders, demonstrated community commitment, educational attainment, soft-skills development and digital literacy.

If a community is close to certification and is committed to reaching the criteria in three years, it may be designated as a Work Ready Community in Progress.

The website features new logos, a new map of certified counties and those working on applications, the criteria for certification and applications for the program.

In the year since Kentucky developed and began implementing the Work Ready Communities program, five counties (Boyle, Daviess, Henderson, Warren and Woodford counties) have been certified as Work Ready; 13 have been designated as Work Ready Communities in Progress; 34

are going through the application process or have shown an interest in the program and one county has been recommended for certification at the Feb. 21 KWIB meeting.

“It’s exciting to see the interest and participation building across the state for the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program,” said Crystal Gibson, chair of the Kentucky Work Ready Communities Review Panel and vice president of Public Affairs at Citigroup. “The new website is more professional and easy to navigate and shows how much the program has matured in the last year. It takes users step-by-step through the certification process and gives them resources such as best practices that will make completing the application easier.”

The Kentucky Work Ready Communities program is one of 25 actions steps that are being implemented by the board to help Kentucky meet the changing demands of a global market and difficult economy. The action steps outlined in KWIB’s WorkSmart Kentucky Strategic Plan were adopted after extensive input from employer and individual customers, local and state workforce professionals, economic development officials, educators and business leaders.

The KWIB membership includes officials from the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, the Cabinet for Economic Development, the Kentucky Labor Cabinet, and the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, who are working with various state agencies and partners to improve the state’s education, workforce and business resources.

In addition, KWIB works with 10 Local Workforce Investment Boards across the state that provide training, education and employer services for businesses and communities.

The 42 members of KWIB serve as an advisory board to Gov. Steve Beshear on workforce training and development issues. The KWIB is charged with creating a statewide vision for workforce development and adopting a plan to move Kentucky forward economically through workforce training and development.

For more information about KWIB and the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program, visit <http://www.kwib.ky.gov/index.htm>.